Wichita Eagle

HE WAS A SURVEYOR.

Now He Is a Humorist and Writes Clever Sketches.

Like George Washington, James L. Ford, who has been writing funny matter for the last ten years, started in life as a surveyor.

JAMES L. FORD.

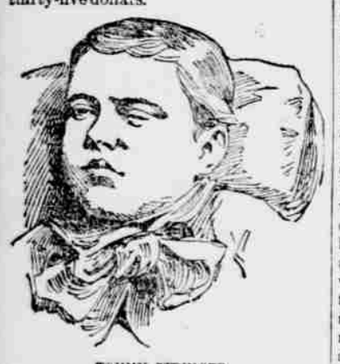
Mr. Ford is the author of some of the best sketches which have appeared in Puck during the last decade, and his "Bunco Steerer's Christmas" will be remembered by many as a gem in its way. As a genuine humorist Mr. Ford deserves to be classed in the very first rank. His sketches strike higher than the commonplace funnyisms from which the minstrel gleans his stock. He was born in St. Louis in 1854, lived in Brooklyn during his boyhood, and was educated at Stockbridge. After some experience as a surveyor he entered journalism, being employed first on a railroad paper, and later taking charge of a New York weekly. He has done much dramatic work and has a large acquaintance.

Mr. Ford thinks "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" about the best type of the most advanced American humor, and speaks of George T. Lanigan, the great American fable writer, as one of the best humorists the country ever produced. Mr. Ford's sketches in Puck have attracted so much attention that he expects to put them in book form soon. "This book," says a writer in the New York Sun speaking of Ford, "will be interesting, but not half so queer as a well written book about Ford himself would be. He represents the Bohemianism of today; quaint, erratic, sober, industrious, but as intolerant of the harness of discipline as the Bohemians of earlier days." TOM MASSON,

HELEN KELLER'S MISSION.

It Is to Educate a Lad Who, Like Herself, Is Deaf, Dumb and Blind.

Tommy Stringer, the five-year-old deaf, dumb and blind boy in whom the good citizens of Pittsburg have taken so deep an interest, is now in the Perkins institute, of Boston. His case, so pitifully similar to her own, aroused the sympathy of little Helen Keller, the deaf, dumb and blind child of Tuscumbia, Ala. When she was in Pittsburg two years ago, Benjamin Wade, of Hulton, gave her a splendid mastiff to which she became very much attached. The dog was killed recently, and she was almost heartbroken. Hearing of her loss Mr. Wade sent her another dog and thirty-five dollars.



TOMMY STRINGER.

Just at the time she received the money Helen heard of Tommy Stringer, and decided to donate the thirty-five dollars as the nucleus of a fund to educate the poor lad. One philanthropic gentleman immediately added $100 to the fund, and Helen is now at the Perkins institute trying to develop little Tommy's faculties.

Tommy is said to have a wonderful intellect, and nobody is likely to reach it so well as Helen Keller, who by slow, tedious stages has herself acquired a remarkable education. Hers is the first case on record of a deaf, dumb and blind child being taught to talk. She appears confident of being able to teach Tommy the same difficult feat.

International Coinage.

The long discussed project of coining gold and silver money which shall be of equal value in all civilized countries is beginning to take form. In the coming conference three commissioners will represent the United States. One of these is ex-Senator Nathaniel P. Hill, of Colorado. Mr. Hill is particularly well qualified for this position. He is a native of New York state, and is now nearly sixty years of age. At Brown university, where he studied chemistry, he showed such aptitude that on graduation he was made professor of the science. In 1864 Boston capitalists sent him to Colorado to look after their mining interests, and since then he has been closely identified with the production and reduction of the precious ores. Those who advocate international coinage regard with much favor Mr. Hill's acceptance of the position offered him.

N. P. HILL.

The Merits of Old Fashioned Lights.

Are we drifting back toward first principles, and are modern inventions of less value than we think? For some time society people have indicated their preference for wax candles as ballroom illuminators, and now an expert in electricity declares in favor of the old fashioned oil lamp, the light from which, he says, will penetrate a fog better than that furnished by any other device.

His Bitter Reflections.

Young Litehart—What's the matter, old boy? La grippe? Dyspepsia? Crossed in love? Tell a fellow, it will do you good.

Old Hardless—Neither, dear boy. I'm simply out of patience with the ways of Providence. Look across the street. There's a yellow dog that would be dear at a nickel. He's got too much hair—thick as a rug on his head. Look at me; worth a million, and just fourteen hairs between my collar button and my eyebrows.

SOME RECENT ANTIQUES.

PRENTICE MULFORD WRITES OF THE DESERTED MINING CAMP.

A Pilgrimage to Dry Bar Made Shortly Before the Return to the States. Ghostlike Visions of the Past—Calling the Roll of the Old Crowd.

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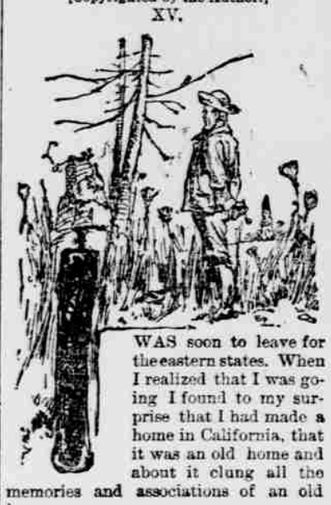
XV.



WAS soon to leave for the eastern states. When I realized that I was going I found to my surprise that I had made a home in California, that it was an old home and about it clung all the memories and associations of an old home.

I wanted to visit the mines and take a farewell look at the camps where I had lived and worked in a period now fast becoming "old times," and I straightway went.

The term antiquity is relative in its character. Twenty years may involve an antiquity as much as two hundred or two thousand. Indeed, as regards sensation and emotion, the more recent antiquity is the more strongly is it realized and more keenly felt. Standing today on the hillside and looking down on the site of the camp where you mined twenty-five years ago, and then going down that hill and treading over that site, now silent and deserted, and you realize, so to speak, a live antiquity. So far as ancient Greece or Rome are concerned, their histories would make no different impression on us if dated six hundred years ago or six thousand. We are imposed upon by these rows of ciphers. They convey really no sense of time's duration. They are but mathematical sounds. We know only that these nations and these men and women lived, ate, slept, drank, quarreled, coveted, loved, hated and died a long time ere we were born, and that of it all we have but fragments of their history, or rather fragments of the history of a few prominent individuals.

But when you stand alone at Dry Bar, where you mined when it was a lively camp in 1857, with its score of muddy sluice streams coursing hither and thither, its stores, its saloons, its hotel and its express office, and see now but one rotting pine log cabin, whose roof has tumbled in and whose sides have tumbled out; where all about is a silent waste of long worked off banks or bare ledge and piles of bowlders in which the herbage has taken root; where every mark of the former houses and cabins has disappeared, save a mound here, or a pile of stone indicating a former chimney there, you have a lively realization of antiquity, though it be a recent one. You knew the men who lived here; you worked with them. You know the sites of the houses in which they lived; you have an event and a memory for every acre of territory hereabout. Down there, where the river narrows between those two high points of rock once stood a rickety bridge. It became more and more shaky and dangerous, until one day Tom Wharton, the justice of the peace, fired by a desire pro bono publico and rather more than his ordinary quantity of whisky, cut the bridge away with his ax, and it floated down stream. Over yonder, on that sandy point, was the richest claim on the Bar.

Will you go down to the Pot Hole Bar, two miles below? The trail ran by the river. But freshet after freshet has rushed over the bank and wiped out the track made by the footprints of a few years. There is no trace of the trail. The chaparral has grown over and quite closed it up. Here and there is a faint trace, and then it brings up short against a young pine or a buckeye, the growth of the last ten years. Yet in former days this path ranked in your mind of the importance of a town street. You had no idea how quickly nature, if left alone, will restore things to what we term "primitive conditions."

If a great city was deserted in these foothills, within twenty years' time the native growths would creep down and in upon it, start plantations of chaparral in the streets, festoon the houses with vines, while winged seeds would fill the gutters and cornices with verdure. It is a hard struggle through the undergrowth to Pot Hole Bar. No man lives there now. No man goes there. Even the bowlder piles and bare ledges of fifteen years ago, marking the scarifying work of your race on mother earth's face, are now mounds overgrown with weeds. What solitude of ancient ruined cities equals this? Their former thousands are nothing to you as individuals, but you knew all the boys at Pot Hole. It was a favorite after supper trip from Dry Bar to Pot Hole to see how the "boys" were getting on, and vice versa from Pot Hole to Dry Bar.

A cottontail rabbit sends a flash of white through the bushes. His family now inhabits Pot Hole. They came back after all of your troublesome race had left, and very glad were the "cottontails" of the riddance. There is a broken shovel at your feet, and near by in the long grass you see the fragment of a sluice's false bottom, bored through with auger holes to catch the gold, and worn quite thin by the attrition of pebble and bowlder along its upper surface. This is about the only vestige of the miner's former work. Stop! On the hillside yonder is a moundlike elevation, and beyond that a long green raised line. One marks the reservoir and the other the ditch.

It was the Pot Hole company's reservoir, built after they had concluded to take water from the ditch and wash off a point of gravel jutting toward the river. They had washed it all off by 1856, and then the company disbanded and went their respective ways. Pot Hole lay very quiet for a couple of years, but little doing there save rocker washing for grub and whisky by four or five men who had concluded that "grub and whisky" were about all in life worth living for. A "slouchy" crowd, prone to bits of rope to tie up their suspenders, unshaven faces, and not a Sunday suit among them.

They have long since gone. They are scattered for the most part you know not where. Two are living in San Francisco and are now men of might and mark. Another you have heard of far away in the eastern states, living in a remote village whose name is never heard of outside the county bounds. One has been reported to you as "up north somewhere;" another down in Arizona "somewhere," and three you can locate in the county. That is but seven out of the one hundred who once dwelt here and roundabout. Now that recollection concentrates herself you do call to mind two others—one died in the county almshouse and another became insane and was sent to Stockton. That is all. Nine out of the one hundred that once resided at Dry Bar. It is mournful. The river monotonously drones, gurgles and murmurs over the riffle. The sound is the same as in '58.

A bird on the opposite bank gives forth at regular intervals a loud querulous cry. It was a bird of the same species whose note so wore on the nerves of Mike McDonald as he lay dying of consumption in a big house which stood yonder, that, after anathematizing it, he would beseech his watcher to take a gun and blow the "cussed" thing's head off. Perhaps it is the same bird. The afternoon shadows are creeping down the mountain side. The outline of the hills opposite has not at all changed, and there, down by the bank, is the enormous fragment of broken rock against which Dick Childs built his brush shelter for the summer, and out of which he was chased by a sudden fall rise of the river. But it is very lonesome with all these people here so vivid in memory, yet all gone, and never, never to come back.

Here it is. The remains of your own cabin chimney a pile of smoke blackened stones in the tall grass. Of the cabin every vestige has disappeared. You built that chimney yourself. It was an awkward affair, but it served to carry out the smoke, and when finished you surveyed it with pleasure and some pride, for it was your chimney. Have you ever felt "snugger" and more cozy and comfortable since than you did on the long, rainy winter nights, when, the supper finished and the crockery washed, you and your "pard" sat by the glowing coals and prepared your pipes for the evening smoke? There were great hopes and some great strikes on Dry Bar in those days; that was in '52. Mining was still in the pan, rocker and long tom era; sluices were just coming in. Hydraulicking 100 foot banks and washing hills off the face of the earth had not been thought of. The dispute as to the respective merits of the long vs. the short handled shovel was still going on. A gray or red shirt was a badge of honor. The deep river beds were held to contain enormous store of golden nuggets. River mining was in its wing and coffer dam phase.

Perhaps the world then seemed younger to you than now? Perhaps your mind then set little store on this picturesque spot, so wrapped were you in visions of the future? Perhaps then you wrote regularly to that girl in the States—your first heart's trouble—and your anticipation was fixed entirely on the home to be built up there on the gold you were to dig here? Perhaps the girl never married you, the home was never built and nothing approaching the amount of ore expected dug out. You held, then, Dry Bar in light estimation. It was for you only a temporary stopping place, from which you wished to get its gold as quickly as you could and get away from as soon as possible.

You never expected Dry Bar, its memories and associations thus to make for themselves a "local habitation and a name" in your mind. We live sometimes in homes we do not realize until much of their material part has passed away. A horned toad scuttles along the dry grass and inflates himself to terrify you as you approach. Those ratlike ground squirrels are running from hole to hole, like gossiping neighbors, and "chipping" shrilly at each other. These are old summer acquaintances at Dry Bar.

Is it with a feeling of curiosity you take up one of those stones handled by you thirty-one years ago, and wonder how like or unlike you may be to yourself at that time? Are you the same man? Not the same young man certainly. The face is worn, the eyes deeper set, the hair more or less gray, and there are lines and wrinkles where none existed then, but that is only the outside of your "soul case." Suppose that you, the John Doe of 1883, could and should meet the John Doe of 1853? Would you know him? Would you agree on all points with him? Could you "get" along with him? Could you "cabin" with him? Could you "summer and winter" with him?

Would the friends of the John Doe of '53, who piled up that chimney, be the friends of the present John Doe, who stands regarding its ruins? Are the beliefs and convictions of that J. Doe those of this J. Doe? Are the jokes deemed so clever by that J. Doe clever to this J. Doe? Are the men great to that J. Doe great to the present J. Doe? Does he now see the filmly, frothy fragments of scores of pricked bubbles sailing away and vanishing in air? If a man die shall he live again? But how much of a man's mind may die out and be supplanted by other ideas ere his body goes back to dust? How much of this J. Doe belongs to that J. Doe, and how much of the same man is there standing here?

PRENTICE MULFORD.

Small but Numerous.

The minute forms found in the chalk and the remains of infusoria in the tripoli, although averaging about the 1-3,000th of an inch in length, are colossal in size when compared with the smallest organisms known to naturalists. The very name of these mites is suggestive—monad, the one, the unit. The purest water, after being strained and filtered through the finest sieve or filter that can be made by the hand of man, when examined under the highest powers of the microscope, is seen to be composed of a mass of monads.

These tiny animals were long looked upon as the ultimate molecules of matter. They are in reality living atoms, and can only be revealed by means of the most powerful lenses, while illuminated with concentrated light. They are found everywhere; in the air we breathe, in the water we drink and in all the juices of animals and plants. A single drop of water contains more monads than there are human beings on the whole earth.—Macon Telegraph.

The average of crime to population is abnormally the same everywhere. Its suppression in some localities, its increase in others, may be traced to either a defective or to a good administration of the criminal laws by the local criminal courts.

AN ADVENTUROUS YOUTH.

His Letters Showed That He Was Having a Great Time.

Kid Jelson, second son in a family of five, made up his mind he would leave the parental roof and go in search of a fortune. So he threw up his clerkship and left for a town in the northern part of the state.

"I'm going to hustle, I am," he said to a select circle of the boys just before he took the train; "and I'm going to make the jays of Jaytown hump themselves. I'll bet their eyes will bulge out when I get in the swim."

So he went away, and incidentally he left behind him a few little debts, of which he spoke thus to his indulgent father:

"I'd pay them now, but I may need the money. If you quiet any one who asks about me I'll send you some money before I've been there a month."

The rest of this true story is best told by the publication of extracts from actual correspondence furnished by the indulgent father, who thinks they are worth printing to encourage others:

NEW YORK, Nov. 17, 1889.

MY DEAR BOY—I think you had better send some money to your tailor. He spoke to me the other day, and I told him I guessed you'd fix things up all right as soon as you got on your feet. Your lodge dues are ripe also, and I would suggest that you communicate with the secretary. We are all well. Write me how you are getting on. Your affectionate father, JAMES JELSON.

JAYTOWN, Dec. 20, 1889.

DEAR GOV.—Everything is lovely and the goose is so high that she is out of sight. I took Dollie to the show the other night, and we had a box. We created a sensation, you bet. I'm going to hit this town hard before I get through, and you'll see me coming in on the top of the wave, sipping the foam, before long. You'll be dead glad to own me. I am not rattling much coin together just now, but wait, and you'll hear the jingle of it clean to New York. Tell Harvy to send me his dress suit by the next express. I will take good care of it. I need to keep up a front. Yours, ——.

Then the indulgent father wrote a letter to his dear boy, asking him to make some definite statement as to his finances, as the family were anxious to hear and know how he was getting along. The dear boy wrote:

DEAR OLD GOV.—Pretty tough this week, but am living high. Cause why? Cause of my great head. Down on Chippe street there is a resort for invalids where they serve up the daintiest meals you ever saw. I am solid with one of the invalids. I go in, order a cup of coffee, and wind up with the incurable's meal of toast, eggs and chicken broth. Don't say a word, but it's great, and the poor duck says he enjoys seeing me eating. My check is coffee, ten cents, and I lay low for meal time to come around again. There's one fellow here who is standing in my way. I've got his girl, and I'm training her bulldog to bite blazes out of him when he comes around again. Give my love to all the folks.

Then the father, who had been pushed by the creditors of his dear boy, began to get uneasy, and he started his next letter with a series of questions like this:

"When are you going to send some money to your tailor? How much are you making a week? Why don't you answer my letters as they ought to be answered?"

The answer came last week. Here it is:

JAYTOWN, April 16.

DEAR POP—I'm out of sight, and I've got the town on a down hill run. Everything is as lovely as a professional beauty. I have given everybody a grand rip up the back, and have bought Dollie a diamond as big as a goose egg. I played solid with the jeweler, and he's got my word for it. Am I in it? Well, I guess I'm having a great time, and I am going to pay you a visit in a special car pretty soon. Inside of a month I'll have to hire a bank expert to keep my cash account. The town is mine and I hold a royal flush. Yours with love, ——.

P. S.—Tell Harvy to hustle his dress suit along and don't mind the tailor. Tell him I'll pay him interest.

Then the father wrote to a friend who lived in the town, and received the information that his son was getting six dollars a week and was living very quietly at a four dollars a week boarding house. The letter ended, "Sundays, when it's pleasant, I think he goes out for a walk by the lake."—New York Evening Sun.

Settling a Wager.

Mr. and Mrs. Billus had an argument the other day.

"I tell you, Maria," said Mr. Billus, "you are mistaken. There are only four children in the Whilks family."

"I know what I am talking about, John. There are five," replied his wife.

"If you were a man I'd bet you ten dollars on it."

"You needn't hesitate on that account, John. I'll take the bet."

"I'll make it twenty dollars to ten dollars."

"Done."

Mrs. Billus ran over to Mrs. Whilks' and returned in a few minutes rather crestfallen.

"You were right, John," she said. "There are only four children."

Mr. Billus reached into his left trousers pocket, took out a ten dollar bill and transferred it leisurely into his right trousers pocket.

"Let this be a warning to you, Maria," he said, with much severity, "and don't be too sure about things hereafter."—Chicago Tribune.

A Good Whitewash.

Slake one-half bushel of good unslaked lime with boiling water, covering it during the process to keep in the steam. Strain the liquor through a sieve, and to it a peck of salt previously dissolved in warm water, three pounds of ground rice boiled to a thin paste, one-half pound of powdered Spanish whiting, and one pound of clean glue which has previously been dissolved by soaking it well and placing it over the fire in a large jack kettle.

Add five gallons of hot water to this mixture and cover it well, and let it stand a few days covered from the dust. It may be kept in a portable furnace when it is applied, for it must be put on hot. A pint of this mixture will cover a square yard of surface. Any coloring matter except green may be added, as green does not mix with the lime.—New York Tribune.

White Squaw Very Brave.

The early annals of the west abound in anecdotes of fortitude under suffering and heroism in circumstances of peril among the wives and mothers of the early pioneers. Many were the instances in which, when their cabins were attacked by the savages, these brave women displayed wonderful courage and presence of mind. In December, 1791, a small party of Indians attacked the dwelling house of Mr. John Merrill in Nelson county, Ky.

Mr. Merrill was alarmed by the barking of his dog, and opened the door to see what was the matter, when he received the fire of seven or eight Indians, by which his leg and arm were broken.

The Indians at once attempted to enter the house, but Mrs. Merrill and her daughter shut the door against them. Then they hewed away a piece of the door, and one of them wedged himself part way through the opening. The heroic mother dealt him a fatal blow with an ax, and hauled him through the passage into the house.

The other savages, unaware of the fate of their companion, and supposing that they had now nearly succeeded in their object, rushed forward. One by one they pushed themselves through the door, and were despatched and drawn inside by Mrs. Merrill, till five dead Indians were in the house. Then the others outside discovered what was going on.

They retired for a few minutes, but soon returned and renewed their efforts to force an entrance. Despairing of succeeding at the door they attempted to descend the chimney. Mr. Merrill heard them, and anticipating their design, ordered his small son to cut open a feather bed and throw the feathers on the fire.

Two of the Indians were already descending the wide mouthed chimney. The smoke and heat from the burning feathers greeted them most unpleasantly. Choking, coughing and well nigh suffocated, they came tumbling down into the room!

Mr. Merrill seized a billet of wood and despatched the half smothered redskins, and Mrs. Merrill in the meantime was defending the door against the efforts of a single savage. Finally he, being wounded, retired, and the family were not disturbed again that night.

A prisoner who escaped from the Indians soon afterward stated that the wounded savage was the only one of his party of eight braves that escaped. When he returned and was asked, "What news?" he answered:

"Bad news for Indian; me lose son, me lose broder. White squaw very brave; she fight better than 'Long Knives'"—the name given to the white men by the Indians because of their long swords.—Youth's Companion.

Cloves are largely grown in Zanzibar. A tree ten years old often yields twenty pounds a year, while one of twenty years' growth may yield 100 pounds. The crop in 1890 was not far from 13,000,000 pounds, and the average local value is about ten cents a pound.

Accommodating.

Jinks—Have you got quarters for a dollar, old man?

Winks—My vest pocket is rather crowded, but pass it over and I'll try to make room for it.—Life.

The Riders of the East.

The ancients rode without saddle or stirrups, on a blanket or pad or bare back, and in spite of this fact, or perhaps by reason of it, rode extremely well. It is wonderful what feats of military horsemanship the bareback rider could perform in the age of what we might call gymnastic equestrianism. Nothing but the knowledge of our oldtime Indian enables us to credit the historical accounts of his agility and skill.

When, centuries later, saddles came into use, there grew up two schools of riding—that of the mailed warrior, whose iron armor well chimed in with his "tongs on a wall" seat in his peaked saddle, and that of the oriental, whose nose and knees all but touched. Why the eastern rider clings to his extremely short leathers it is hard to say, unless it be to place him the higher above his horse, and therefore make him the more imposing when he stands up in his stirrups to brandish scimitar or matchlock. Yet he is a wonderful rider, this same oriental, as indeed is every man who from youth up is the companion of the horse.—Colonel T. A. Dodge in Harper's.

Pills Aid in the Reduction of Flesh.

Supposing a corpulent person to be dieting and losing a quarter of a pound in weight daily. If by the use of a little medicine he quickens the action of the kidneys and bowels, and so increases the elimination of the waste, his reduction in weight will be much more rapid.

Experiments made by the writer upon himself will serve as an illustration. In trying to reduce his weight he found, after a time, that notwithstanding he was living upon the smallest possible quantity of food consistent with strength and his diet was carefully selected, he could not pull off more than a pound of flesh per week. He then commenced taking two rhubarb pills and half a pint of hot water at bed time, and on rising a teaspoonful of Carlsbad salts in a cupful of hot water.

This treatment he persisted in for a week, during which time a reduction of five pounds in weight was effected without loss of strength, and there was a decided improvement in the general health and mental condition. By the means of it the elimination of waste was greatly increased. Not only were the kidneys and bowels made to do more work, but the liver and digestive organs shared in the stimulation.